

Electronic Data Analysis and Laboratory Fraud

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Laboratory fraud is a growing environmental concern for the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA). Ensuring that environmental laboratories are performing and properly reporting the results of environmental analyses is essential. This issue is a major cornerstone of environmental enforcement and compliance and the protection of public health and the environment. Providing expertise in laboratory fraud investigations has always been a major function of the National Enforcement Investigations Center (NEIC). Recently, NEIC has been using an innovative approach in these investigations by applying electronic data analysis (EDA) techniques (aka, computer forensics). NEIC's capabilities in laboratory fraud investigations are enhanced by its unique combination of EDA seizure and recovery, a modern state-of-the-art chemistry laboratory, and multimedia field inspections. The EDA team is able to work closely with experienced chemists and multimedia field personnel to trace the origins of data fraud. All three disciplines are essential in an investigation of laboratory instruments and automated industrial processes. These skills have recently been applied across the country on criminal and civil investigations in environmental analytical laboratories, reformulated fuel investigations, and automated waste water treatment plants.

The EDA fraud poster will illustrate the unique niche being filled by NEIC and its impact on laboratory fraud.